

DECEMBER 2023

HEALTHY FAMILIES



FAMILY & COMMUNITY HEALTH NEWSLETTER
TEXAS AGRILIFE EXTENSION - HALE COUNTY



WELCOME FRIENDS!

Welcome to the December Healthy Families Newsletter! I seem to say this every month... BUT how is it already December?!!

December is a fickle month. It can bring us so many reasons to rejoice while also tempting us to feel overwhelmed and stressed! I hope this newsletter's suggestions help you keep the holidays happy and light. Wherever you are and whoever you spend it with, make sure you allow your mental, emotional, and physical health to remain a priority. Merry Christmas and my wish for you is to enjoy a wonderful holiday season with those you love!

FUN FAMILY GAMES TO PLAY!

After enjoying a yummy meal with family and opening gifts, there may seem like a lull in the festivities. Below are a few ideas that will keep the family moving and engaged in activities to create fun memories!

- Guess that Christmas Scent game: fill up jars/cups with fun Christmas scents like pine needles, peppermints, marshmallows, etc. Then blindfold a family member and have them guess what each scent is!
- Holiday Scavenger Hunt: If everyone is tired of being cooped up in the house, create a fun scavenger hunt! A tutorial is provided here!
- Christmas Matching Game: If you have little ones at home, this one is perfect for them! Use this free download to print out the Christmas matching cards!

For more Christmas game ideas, follow this link:

https://www.thepioneerwoman.com/holidays-celebrations/g34507380/fun-christmas-games/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=arb_ga_pw_md_dsa_prog_mix_us_20736056582&gclid=CjwKCAiAxGqBhBQEiwAlDNAZlKVHaES8qSO-eq9uhbmmaYeBbtElUzJELo-zibZEVFpO2Z0dkzD2RoCHXQQA_VD_BwE

CHRISTMAS DECORATING HACKS!

Check out this link for tips for decorating a small space for the holidays!

<https://youtu.be/ohRKOaAxKCG?si=N81qg24RUn4zG5bo>

Some of the ideas include:

- 1) A similar color palette throughout the house.
- 2) Use the walls and command strips to hang wreaths, advent calendars, etc. This is the easiest way to utilize your space
- 3) Use a lot of lights (twinkle lights, fairy lights, etc.) to make the space feel festive.
- 4) Use festive pillows on couches and in bedrooms to extend the holiday cheer.

By: @THEDIY MOMMY



THIS SEASON'S SPECIALTIES

TURKEY LEFTOVERS

Turkey leftovers?! Try out this recipe below for Turkey Tacos! If you would like to search for other turkey recipes, click here: <https://dinnertonight.tamu.edu/turkey-leftovers/>.

Turkey Tacos with Cranberry Salsa

Servings: 8

Ingredients:

Turkey Taco

- 8 corn tortillas
- 1 lb extra lean ground turkey (or turkey leftovers)
- 1 cups low fat Monterey Jack Cheese blend
- 2 cups lettuce sliced thin
- 1 bunch cilantro for garnish

Cranberry Salsa

- 15 oz whole berry cranberry sauce
- 1/2 apple seeded
- 1 jalapeno seeded
- 1 tsp sugar
- 2 tbsp ginger chopped and peeled
- 2 tbsp cilantro
- 1 tbsp lemon juice

Instructions

Taco

1. Brown the ground turkey in a skillet. Place in bowl for assembly.
2. Shred lettuce. Place in bowl for assembly.
3. Place cheese in bowl for assembly.

Cranberry Salsa

1. In a food processor add the cranberry sauce, apple, jalapeno, sugar, ginger, cilantro, and lemon juice. Blend well. Place in bowl for assembly.

Assemble the Tacos

1. On a corn tortilla place the turkey, then lettuce, then cranberry salsa, then cheese.
2. Enjoy!

Nutrition Facts

Turkey Tacos and Cranberry Salsa

Amount Per Serving

Calories 273

Calories from Fat 54

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 6g 9%

Saturated Fat 3g 15%

Polyunsaturated Fat 1g

Monounsaturated Fat 1g

Cholesterol 48mg 16%

Sodium 128mg 5%

Potassium 182mg 5%

Total Carbohydrates 35g 12%

Dietary Fiber 3g 12%

Sugars 19g

Protein 20g 40%

Vitamin A 13%

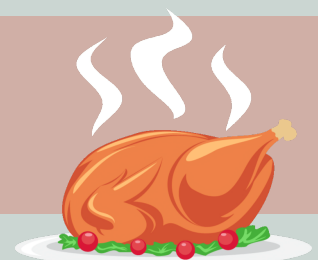
Vitamin C 10%

Calcium 13%

Iron 10%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2000 calorie diet.

FIND INFORMATION ABOUT SAFELY COOKING YOUR TURKEY, HERE:
[HTTPS://AGRILIFETODAY.TAMU.EDU/2021/11/09/TALKING-HOLIDAY-TURKEY-WITH-TEXAS-AM-AGRILIFE-EXTENSION-SERVICE/](https://agriflifelife.tamu.edu/2021/11/09/talking-holiday-turkey-with-texas-am-agrilife-extension-service/)



GIFT-GIVING ON A BUDGET

Christmas can be a fun time of giving and seeing family and friends. However, it can also be expensive to buy gifts for everyone. Check out these tips to help you save!

Develop a Gift-Giving Philosophy

Think about why you are buying that gift instead of how you are going to pay for them all.

Examples:

- What does giving mean to you?
- Are you hoping to impress others with how much you spend?
- Do you feel obligated to buy for these people?
- Do you want to find the perfect present?



Don't Spend Outside your Comfort Zone

If you want to buy a particular gift for someone, but it is outside of your comfort zone, don't do it. At the moment you will think it will be okay, but in January you will wish you had saved your money. Instead, you can start saving money next year to be able to buy the gift next year.

Budget & Track Your Spending

It may be obvious, but using a budget and sticking to it is a huge benefit.

- Set a limit on how much you will spend this year.
- Try using a planner, this will help you stay on track with your budget. Make sure you write down each present you buy!

There is more to Christmas than Gifts

Gifts have become a major part of Christmas, although we need to remember there is so much more to it! Christmas is a time for faith, and spending quality time with your family and friends. So, don't stress about gifts but instead enjoy all the holiday festivities!

To read more about gift-giving on a budget, visit:

<https://www.ramseysolutions.com/budgeting/tips-to-save-money-on-christmas>

TOP 5 TIPS FOR KEEPING YOUR HOLIDAYS STRESS FREE!



For some people, the holidays are a happy and joyous time where families get together, friends are reunited, and food and gifts are shared. However, for many people, the holidays can be one of the most difficult times of the year. Along with joy, the holiday season can bring unwelcome guests and excessive demands. Cooking, shopping, cleaning, decorating, and parties, just to name a few. All these extra pressures can lead to stress, depression, and many other mental health issues. Below are five tips to prevent a holiday meltdown.

1. **Reach out.** If you feel lonely or isolated, seek out community, religious or other social events or communities. Many may have websites, online support groups, social media sites or virtual events. They can offer support and companionship.
2. **Volunteer.** Dedicating your time to help others is a good way to lift your spirits and broaden your friendships. For example, consider dropping off a meal and dessert at a friend's home during the holidays.
3. **Take a breather.** Make some time for yourself. Find an activity you enjoy. Take a break by yourself. Spending just 15 minutes alone, without distractions, may refresh you enough to handle everything you need to do. Find something that reduces stress by clearing your mind, slowing your breathing and restoring inner calm. Some options may include:
 - Taking a walk at night and stargazing
 - Listening to soothing music
 - Reading a book
4. **Learn to say no.** Saying yes when you should say no can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed. Friends and colleagues will understand if you can't participate in every project or activity.
5. **Don't abandon healthy habits.** Don't let the holidays become a free-for-all. Overindulgence only adds to your stress and guilt. Choose nutritious foods, get plenty of sleep, and include regular exercise in your holiday plans.

Read more here! <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress/art-20047544>.

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